

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 102210  
ORIGIN ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00  
PA-02 SP-02 ICAE-00 INRE-00 SS-15 SSO-00 NSCE-00  
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DRAFTED BY ARA/PAN:CDAVIS/JLP  
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-----129673 211720Z /50  
O 211705Z APR 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 102210

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PEPR, PN

SUBJECT:TORRIJOS INTERVIEW ON APRIL 21 TODAY SHOW

FOLLOWING IS PARTIAL TRANSCRIPT OF TORRIJOS INTERVIEW ON  
NBC TODAY SHOW, APRIL 21, BY FRED FRANCIS

QUOTE: FRANCIS: YESTERDAY TORRIJOS WAS HAPPY, AND TALKED  
OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S TRIP TO PANAMA IN THREE WEEKS.

QUOTE: HE IS NOT CONCERNED ABOUT WASHINGTON'S REACTION TO  
HIS STATEMENT THAT HE WOULD HAVE SABOTAGED THE CANAL HAD  
THE TREATIES NOT BEEN RATIFIED.

QUOTE: QUESTION: DID YOU REALIZE THAT YOU ANGERED MANY,  
MANY SENATORS?

QUOTE: ANSWER: NO, I DIDN'T KNOW THAT. THEY HAD BEEN  
THERE FOR 8 WEEKS HOLDING THAT MICROPHONE. THEY WENT  
THROUGH THE WHOLE VOCABULARY OF INSULTS.  
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QUOTE: FRANCIS: THE TREATIES MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN RATIFIED  
IF THE SENATE HAD KNOWN OF TORRIJOS' PLAN TO SABOTAGE THE  
CANAL. THAT PLAN WAS WORKED OUT WITH LIBYA'S MARXIST  
LEADER, COL. MOHMAR KADAFI AND CALLED FOR PANAMANIAN  
FORCES INSIDE THE CANAL ZONE READY TO ATTACK IF THE

TREATIES HAD BEEN REJECTED. TORRIJOS SAYS HIS MEN WERE  
IN POSITION AND AMERICAN TROOPS COULDN'T HAVE STOPPED THEM.

QUOTE: TORRIJOS: THAT WAS VERY UNNECESSARY. THE CANAL  
COULD NOT BE DEFENDED BY 10,000 TROOPS, BY 1,000 TROOPS  
OR BY 100,000 TROOPS. THE ONLY THING THAT DEFENDS THE  
CANAL IS THE WILLINGNESS OF OUR PEOPLE NOT TO DO ANY HARM  
TO THE CANAL.

QUOTE: FRANCIS: AND GENERAL TORRIJOS KNOWS THE PEOPLE  
WILL DO WHATEVER HE SAYS. TORRIJOS STAYS IN POWER FOR  
MANY REASONS. HE SAYS BECAUSE HE HAS NEVER DONE ANYTHING  
TO BE OVERTHROWN AND NEVER WILL. BUT HE'S ALSO A VERY  
SHREWD POLITICIAN WHO HAS NEVER LOST TOUCH WITH THE  
PEOPLE. FRED FRANCIS, NBC NEWS, COCLECITO, PANAMA.  
UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** TELEVISION, TREATY RATIFICATION, PRESS CONFERENCES, CANALS  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 21 apr 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Subject:** TORRIJOS INTERVIEW ON APRIL 21 TODAY SHOW FOLLOWING IS PARTIAL TRANSCRIPT OF TORRIJOS INTERVIEW ON NBC TODAY SHOW, APRIL 21, BY FRED FRANCIS  
**TAGS:** PEPR, SOPN, PN, US, (TORRIJOS HERRERA, OMAR)  
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**Review Markings:**  
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